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skepticism with regard to legend and a consequent disposition to overwork the mythological explanation, and a tendency to reject good source-evidence, on the basis of a highly subjective feeling as to its improbability, or to supplant it by conjecture. His history is, however, a great synthesis by a great authority; there is no other work in the field of Greek history that is at once so scientific, so modern, and so complete.

The author writes with scientific detachment, and his pages seem at times a little arid, when one remembers the glowing humanity, the poetry, and the enthusiasm of Curtius. On the other hand, Beloch's style is admirable for its simplicity and clearness. He has the gift of generalization and the power of summing up complicated situations and conditions in brief and forcible form.

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Plautus. With an English translation by PAUL NIXON. In four volumes. Vol. I (Loeb Classical Library). New York: Putnam, 1916. Pp. xv+571.

The first volume of Mr. Nixon's translation of Plautus in the Loeb Classical Library, containing the *Amphitruo*, *Asinaria*, *Aulularia*, *Bacchides*, and *Captivi*, shows a difficult task happily begun. Mr. Nixon's rare aptitude for sympathetic translation of Roman humor is well known through his studies in Martial, entitled *A Roman Wit*. What he has done for the epigram he is now attempting for the master of the Roman comedy, whose style the Muses would have used had they wished to speak in Latin. As four of the five plays appearing in this volume rank among the ten most popular comedies of Plautus, one may fairly judge of the soundness of scholarship and literary skill of the translator.

Fr. Leo's edition of 1895-96 has been selected as the basis of the text and has been followed in the main. Lines bracketed by Leo (some 88 in all) are printed apart at the foot of the pages where they occur and, when in sequence, are usually accompanied by a translation. Brief critical notes indicate lacunae, the more important corruptions in the text, and a few favored conjectures. The printed page presents a neat appearance, with no asterisks or daggers to stab the eye. A few verses offensive to the modern taste have been "diluted" in the translation. The typography is excellent. Slips are comparatively few: e.g., *Aul.* 518, *thylacistae* of Leo's text is translated as though *phylacistae*, the manuscript reading; *Capt.* 135, *macritudine* is translated apparently as if *aegritudine*; *Capt.* 441, *inventum inveni* is something more than "do not lose this friend you have found." Occasional omissions in the translations may be detected (e.g., *Capt.* 453, *de praeda*); sometimes the English tends to become diffuse (e.g., *Capt.* 300-303); but such is the writer's gift of transmuting the Latin colloquial into vigorous English it would be hypercritical to cavil at what must seem to many mere

matters of taste. In the brief Index of Proper Names the references are made to the Latin text, yet the names are given in their English forms: e.g., Elis, Elean, Syruses. The inclusion of references to names of mythological personages and similar allusions would have added to the usefulness of this index.

The arrangement and economy of the edition conform to the general plan of the series. The Introduction (pp. i-xiii) is tantalizingly brief in view of the significance of Plautus in the world's literature. Doubtless the subsequent volumes will offer supplementary material. Explanatory notes are few but well selected. On the other hand, numerous stage directions, offered with much discrimination and fine feeling for the dramatic effects, indicate change of moods as well as movements on the stage and render a commentary almost unnecessary.

Mr. Nixon has faced fairly the problem of determining an adequate and pleasing English medium to reproduce the *sermo cotidianus*. His style achieves, on the whole, both originality and a sustained vigor. Proper characterization of the several rôles has been carried through, so that slaves talk as slaves; masters as masters; and the women use a feminine vocabulary. Though at times Mr. Nixon may seem to carry verbal extravagance even beyond Plautus, his great merit lies in the possession of a clear, fluent, and bubbling style admirably suited to reflect the Plautine exuberance and grace without distortion or caricature of the easy freedom of colloquial speech. Of stylistic mannerisms the translation is not entirely free: such devices as emphasis by repetition (*pauper sum; fateor*, "I'm poor, poor, I admit it"; *pauperum pauperrimum*, "I'm poor, awfully poor, dreadfully poor") and the postponement of the subject or principal verb to the final place, producing a certain French flavor, are of frequent occurrence. But only one who has independently experimented could so successfully run the gamut of the "categories of translation," and it is evident that Mr. Nixon has done so.

Plautine oaths are a pitfall for the unwary. Although usually felicitous, Mr. Nixon inclines to avail himself of a license common on the American stage: "O my God" (*perdidisti*); "O my God! My God! I'm ruined!" (*ei mihi perii hercele*).

The simple device of putting "sir" into the mouth of a slave to indicate servility aids much in the characterization; yet Alcumena would hardly have used the word in threatening Sosia (*Amph.* 721, 741).

This new translation presents the plays with a new charm. We feel with fresh conviction the nobility of the *Captives*, the liveliness of the *Pot of Gold*, the sordid knavery of *The Comedy of Asses*, the brilliance of the *Bacchis Sisters*, and the bizarre humor of the *Amphitryon*. Mr. Nixon's work is a highly sympathetic interpretation of these five comedies.

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